From: Beckett, Kim <kim.beckett@yale.edu>
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2019 8:54 AM
To: JudTestimony
Cc: Rep. Scanlon, Sean; Sen. Cohen, Christine
Subject: Ethan's Law HB 7218

Thank you for allowing me to submit testimony to you in support of passing Ethan's Law, or HB 7218.

The devastation our community experienced on January 31, 2018, losing one of our beloved children, cannot be described in words. Ethan Song was a partner in our Unified Sports program – a year-round high school sports team consisting of students with and without intellectual disabilities. He had recently completed his freshman soccer season and joined us thereafter for basketball. His gift to connect with individuals with disabilities was remarkable. It was a gift not all possess.

Ethan's tragic death left a huge hole in our school and with our team. Our athletes with disabilities did not quite understand at first the loss of Ethan, but could see it in their partners' faces and tears. We brought in a therapy dog for the first practice. While helpful, children 14-18 years of age should never have to cope with grief of this magnitude.

The Song Family has been open with the details of Ethan's death, the fact that he accidentally shot himself in the face and the coroner advised the parents to not view the body. Can you imagine having someone say that to you about YOUR child?

The fact is all this devastation and grief could have been avoided. Guns, whether loaded or not, should always be stored in a secure and locked location, away from curious children. It is not until the age of 25 that the brain develops the understanding of risk. Before then, you can teach and warn, but children are curious and will seek out risk. And sometimes that curiosity can kill us.

The gun that killed Ethan was not securely locked away. All he and his friend had to do was open a plastic container.

It is our job to keep all children safe, but we need your help. Please pass HB 7218 and prevent further deaths of our children, prevent further destruction of families and communities. You are elected to make these commonsense laws, and there can be no one law that has better common sense than Ethan's Law.

Kim Beckett
Spread the Word to End the Worc
(203) 214-6401 cell